

LeRay Paige

HONOR AND REMEMBER FORUM

Madame Chairman and Members of this Committee,

Thank You for the invitation to come here and share what Honor and Remember wants to do to Honor our Fallen Heroes and Remember their Sacrifice and the Sacrifices of the Families that had to endure the loss of a loved one that served. I just want to say first, that we the people of Michigan, need to say to you and all the Legislators that have been elected, Thank You for serving the citizens of this State.

It is, with this thought, That I want to say that those who have put on the uniform of the many Branches of our Armed Forces and left Home and Loved ones to serve, some near and many far away in a foreign land, have taken on the job of trying to keep our rights to Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness intact by going into harms' way by just putting on a Uniform. They have gone above and beyond the call of Duty to serve our country. Many have fought for the Flag that covered their coffin. The Flag they fought and died for also bring them home. Honor and Remember knows that they served with their last breath. But could that be all that we can do to honor them. Isn't there something more we as a Nation can do, to acknowledge the Sacrifice of those who gave their all and the Sacrifice of the Loved ones who really expected their loved one to return home and now will wonder for who knows, how long, if their loved one died in vain and would be quickly forgotten because after all is said and done, they are not there to share the rest of their lives as a living being. Wouldn't you want to try and do something more to show your appreciation for those sacrifices? I know I would and so should every person in this room. What if you were asked to be a pallbearer for someone who gave their life for someone else. Wouldn't you want to do more if you could? That is what the Honor and Remember Flag stands for. Our deepest and sincerest Gratitude for those who served and gave their all and the Sacrifice of the Families that have had to deal with their loss.

Please understand, We've come here to ask that the Honor and Remember Flag and all that it stands for, complements, and enhances what we as a Country, should do to show

unconditional affirmation of our Military and their families. That affirmation has been slowly fading away and a prime example is what we are doing on just one weekend of the year.

All Americans welcome Memorial Day as the day where we recognize those who have died in service to our country but the amount of time that we spend to acknowledge the reason for that day is only a short amount of time compared to what we really plan to do on Memorial Day Weekend which is Cook-outs, going to the beach, fireworks, and attending Parades. All these activities gives us the idea that we are celebrating Memorial Day. ONE Day in one Weekend and that might be only for a short time or as much as 2 hours if they are inclined to be a little longwinded. We need to change our Mindset about when we recognize our Fallen Heroes and their Families' Sacrifice to not just a weekend but a continual reminder, if need be, that All of America, would show their concern for Our Fallen Comrades and their Families by showing that they care in the other 11 months of the year. Not every minute, but enough so, that we will Honor and Remember the Sacrifices of both Military and Family. The Honor and Remember Flag does that every day somewhere in this Country. This is what we want to do in the State and in the Country as a whole. We're standing up to say that we need to Honor and Remember our Fallen Heroes and the Families that have given so much. Is that too much to ask for? I don't think so!

A couple of years ago, I noticed a movement on the Internet that went viral in no time at all in this country and that was the Gratitude Campaign that showed our Military personnel that we appreciated them when and wherever we saw them. It was your hand over your heart and you would lower your hand down toward your waist bending at the elbow outwardly. This Campaign is still going on all around the country. It was this symbol that showed our Military that we cared, really cared about them.

Today, there is a symbol that shows the Family of a Fallen Hero that we care, really care for the Sacrifice and loss that, they, the Families have had to endure when their loved one is no longer with them. The Honor and Remember Flag is that Symbol that recognizes the Sacrifices of all our Fallen Heroes, starting with The Revolutionary War, right up to the Present War on Terror.

We need to show that WE, as Citizens of Michigan and the Country, will pass on to every generation that follows that those who have lost their loved ones will be encouraged by the Honor and Remember Flag that some Families in Michigan are already Flying on Flagpoles below the Stars and Stripes, with all the Respect due Old Glory and the Recognition that the Honor and Remember Flag gives to help preserve the memory of those who gave their all.

Every family in their own way diligently works to preserve their loved one's memory. When the last person who remembers that loved one's name passes away, he or she will be truly forgotten. That should not be the case. Through the establishment of this symbol, the Honor and Remember Flag, we are able to leave a visual legacy, generate a focus of discussion for educating everyone and make a National Statement of Thanks. Michigan should be included in helping make this a visual reality.

Our mission is much more than encouraging the display of a simple Flag. Rather, the Honor and Remember Flag is a means by which to pay daily tribute to generations of American Heroes throughout history, and an important expression of the American Spirit that cries out to preserve the legacy of Our Fallen Heroes and their Families. I conclude by saying that one of the most famous Generals of World War II said these words," LET US NOT MOURN THAT SUCH MEN DIED, BUT REJOICE THAT SUCH MEN LIVED". - GEN. GEORGE S. PATTON. I want to add a P. S. : REMEMBER OUR FALLEN AND HONOR THEIR FAMILIES. Thank You.

American Legion Dept. of Michigan

To serve those who served and returned
&
To honor and remember those who served
and did not.



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To: LeRoy Paige
Re: Honor and Remember Flag

March 10, 2014

LeRoy,

It was nice talking with you yesterday but, you asked a tough question. It started simply enough as "Do you support the flying of the Honor and Remember Flag?". The answer was a simple yes. Then you asked the tough one, "Why?". My first thought was, "because that's why we're here, to support the families of veterans either returning or fallen". Then I began to think of the sentiments I put on our post website:

We fly the Colors for a country full of families that sent loved ones off to war,
We fly the POW/MIA flag for the many families of those that might yet be found,
We fly the Honor and Remember Flag for the single family of one lost.

I first considered those thoughts as I was raising Joey Prentler's flag on October 4th. I spent most of last night considering them and trying to figure out why that flag means so much to me.

To provide a reference as to the values I hold and frame my comments below, please at this point take a break from reading this letter and read the "A Call For Honor Guard Volunteers" that I have enclosed.

As you now know my wife Julie and I lost our son in August of 2011. I don't feel that we are entitled to an Honor and Remember Flag as our son died in an accident and not due to enemy action. I consider my opinion objective on the flag itself as I have nothing to gain or lose. I do understand the deep pain that comes with loss and that it will never disappear but, it can be dulled a bit with time and support. I see the Honor and Remember Flag as a symbol honoring those that made the ultimate sacrifice and our pledge to support their families.

I concur with the opinion of the American Legion that the American Flag should be the single unifying symbol for this great nation of ours. I don't see the Honor and Remember Flag conflicting with that opinion.

The Honor and Remember Flag being a reminder to those grieving families that we as individuals and as a nation owe those that gave their lives an eternal debt of gratitude, it is a physical token, that can be held in times of need and remind them that we are but a call away. Also, as a message to those still serving that should they join the ranks of those who have gone before us that we will be there for their families, that they will be remembered and never forgotten.

To this day I remember the look on faces of Joey's family as I hoisted his flag. It was a mixture of Sorrow, Pride, Appreciation and Sacrifice. It was in defense of the nation signified by the American Flag flying above his that he gave his life.

In trying to make sense of my rambling thoughts, I have concluded that: the American Flag signifies that we as individuals are united and owe the nation a debt of gratitude for the freedoms we enjoy and that the Honor and Remember Flag signifies that we as a nation owe a deep debt of gratitude to those individuals lost defending this nation. To my mind the two flags are complimentary to each other.

Matt Kaleyta
Commander, Carson City Post 380.

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RESOLUTION NO. 1-2015, Carson City Post 380 Support for the Honor and Remember Flag

WHEREAS, It is the belief of the membership of Carson City Post 380 of the American Legion Department of Michigan that one of the guiding principles of our organization is to aid and assist veterans and the families of veterans who served in time of war and honor those that gave their lives in defense of the nation; and

WHEREAS, SPECIAL RESOLUTION 419 THE MINNEAPOLIS AFFIRMATION states in part "RESOLVED, that in affirmation of our troth, we pledge our unrelenting vigilance on behalf of our comrades-in-arms, their children, and their widows and orphans"; and

WHEREAS, We find no conflict between the American Flag serving as the single unifying symbol of this great nation and recognition of the Honor and Remember Flag as a token of honor and our appreciation for the military members who sacrificed their lives; and

WHEREAS, Display of the Honor and Remember Flag and presentation of said flag to the families of fallen service members will provide aid and comfort to those we have pledged to support and provide a continuing symbol of the gratitude owed; and

AND NOW THERE BE IT RESOLVED, that Carson City Post 380 of the American Legion Department of Michigan believes that the flying of the Honor And Remember Flag delivers a message to our service member and their families that we as Americans will never forget their contribution to our freedom and that we are mindful that at any time another could be added to the ranks of those who have gone before us;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Carson City Post 380 of the American Legion Department of Michigan shall support a resolution at the District, State and National levels of the American Legion supporting the display of the Honor and Remember Flag;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Carson City Post 380 of the American Legion Department of Michigan supports the passage of legislation on the State and National levels recognizing the Honor and Remember Flag and what it stands for.

POST CERTIFICATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 1-2015

Upon a Motion duly made and seconded on March 17, 2015, at a regular meeting of Carson City American Legion Post 380, we certify that the foregoing Resolution No. 1-2015 was approved by the members being present.


Matthew Kaleyta, Post Commander


Jack J. Clayton, Post Adjutant